

MINUTES

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF HENDERSON

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2020

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners met for a regularly scheduled meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the Historic Courthouse on Main Street, Hendersonville, NC.

Those present were: Commissioner Mike Edney, Chairman Grady Hawkins, Commissioner Rebecca McCall, Commissioner Charlie Messer, Vice-Chairman William Lapsley, County Manager Steve Wyatt, Assistant County Manager Amy Brantley, Attorney Russ Burrell and Clerk to the Board Teresa Wilson.

Also present via the community room were: Director of Business and Community Development John Mitchell, Emergency Management/Rescue Coordinator Jimmy Brissie, Construction Manager David Berry, Public Health Director Steve Smith, IT Director Mark Seelenbacher, IT Assistant Director Chris Staton, PIO Kathy Finotti (AV Room) – videotaping, Deputies Mike Marsteller and Robert Merz as security.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Hawkins called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

INVOCATION

The invocation was provided by County Manager Steve Wyatt.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was led by Chairman Grady Hawkins.

INFORMAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

Discussion/Adjustment of Consent Agenda

Commissioner Lapsley made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda minus the Families First Response Act. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA consisted of the following:

Minutes

Draft minutes were presented for board review and approval of the following meeting(s):

- March 18, 2020 - Regularly Scheduled Meeting
- March 27, 2020 - Emergency Meeting
- March 31, 2020 - Emergency Meeting

Motion:

I move the Board approves the minutes of March 18, 2020m, March 27, 2020, and March 31, 2020.

Tax Collector's Report

Collections Specialist Luke Small had presented the Tax Collector's Report to the Commissioners dated April 1, 2020 for information only. No action was required.

Pending Releases and Refunds

The pending releases and refunds have been reviewed by the Assessor. As a result of that review, it is the opinion of the Assessor that these findings are in order. Supporting documentation is on file in the County Assessor's Office.

DATE APPROVED:

These pending release and refund requests are submitted for the approval by the Henderson County Board of Commissioners.

<u>Type:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>
Total Taxes Released from the Charge	\$ 1,477.15
Total Refunds as a Result of the Above Releases	\$ 721.39

Motion:

I move the Board approves the Combined Release/Refund Report as presented.

County Financial Report/Cash Balance Report

The February 2020 County Financial and Cash Balance Reports were provided for the Board’s review and approval.

The following are explanations for departments/programs with higher budget to actual percentages for the month of February:

- Dues/Non-Profit Contributions – payment of 3rd quarter Board approved appropriations.
- Emergency Management – includes payments to other agencies for FEMA grant reimbursements and Board approved capital purchases.
- Rescue Squad – payment of 3rd quarter Board approved appropriations
- Agri-Business – excess operating expenditures to be covered by membership fees
- Mental Health – payment of 3rd quarter Board approved maintenance of effort (MOE)
- Public Education – payment 8 of 10 of annual appropriation made to the public school system

The project to date deficit in the Hendersonville High School Project (2019) is due to the payment of architect fees and general construction for the project in the Capital Projects Fund, to be reimbursed from a future financing.

Year to Date Net Revenues over expenditures for the Solid Waste Landfill Fund is due to Board approved capital outlay and maintenance and repair of equipment.

Year to Date Net Revenues over expenditures for the Cane Creek Water and Sewer District Fund is due to expenditures related to the Mud Creek Interceptor Project.

Motion:

I move that the Board of Commissioners approve the February 2020 County Financial Report and Cash Balance Report as presented.

Budget Amendment – Debt Service Fund

In the FY2020 Adopted Budget, \$1,794,589 was included in debt service for Hendersonville High School. Due to the timing of the borrowing for Hendersonville High, the planned interest only payment included in the budget will not be due in FY20. Staff recommends transferring those funds to the Debt Service Fund, to be utilized for debt service in upcoming fiscal years.

Motion:

I move the Board approves a budget amendment transferring \$1,794,589 from General Fund HCPS Debt Service into the Debt Service Fund.

Notification of Vacancies

The Notification of Vacancies is being provided for the Board’s information. They will appear on the next

agenda under “Nominations”.

1. Hospital Corporation Board of Directors – 1 vac.
Position #2

McDuffey request for refund of twice paid deed transfer tax

Attorney A. Scott McDuffie has requested the refund of the sum of Four Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$450.00) in real property transfer tax. Mr. McDuffie’s letter requesting the refund is attached. Lee King, Register of Deeds, verified the accuracy of Mr. McDuffie’s letter.

Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. §105-228.37, a request for refund of overpayment of real property conveyance transfer tax must be made within six months of the date of payment. The payment was made on or about December 23, 2019.

If the Board determines that a refund is in order, the refund will be of the amount of the tax paid, \$450.00.

Motion:

I move that the Board grant the refund requested insofar as it conforms to the requirements of N.C. Gen. Stat. §105-228.37(b).

Families First Response Act – pulled for discussion and tabled to a later meeting

The “Families First Coronavirus Response Act” as adopted by the United States Congress, requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave, and included an expansion to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), because of a qualifying need related to a public health emergency. In this instance, the public health emergency meaning an emergency with respect to COVID-19 as declared by a Federal, State or local authority.

The Act provides that “an employer of an employee who is a health care provider or an emergency responder may elect to exclude such employee from the application of the provisions in the amendments made under section 3102 of this Act.” The Board is requested to approve the following list of County employees who are defined as Emergency Responders, for the purposes of administering the Act.

- Law Enforcement Officers
- Correctional Institution Personnel
- Emergency Medical Services Personnel
- Physicians
- Nurses
- Public Health Personnel
- Emergency Medical Technicians
- Paramedics
- Emergency Management Personnel
- 911 Operators
- Child Welfare Workers and Child Welfare Service Providers

Commissioner Edney feels this is removing a benefit for our employees and is not in favor.

Attorney Russ Burrell explained that sick leave is used for when you can’t get childcare. These positions are positions you cannot train for quickly. It is practical recognition of the nature of this emergency. Without these employees you would not have sufficient workforce for these areas. They can use normal “sick leave” if they are sick, this provision allows the normal plus use of sick leave for loss of childcare.

Steve Wyatt stated the Board of Commissioners may choose not to act if that is their preference.

Chairman Hawkins requested staff put together more information for the Board (number of people/positions affected) and rolled the agenda item to future meeting.

Earth Day 2020 Proclamation

April 22nd, 2020 will mark the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Even during these tough times, Environmental Programs would like to celebrate Earth Day through this proclamation and encourage Henderson County residents to participate safely at home.

Motion:

I move that the Board adopt a Proclamation designating April 22nd, 2020 as Earth Day in Henderson County.

Child Abuse Prevention Month

The County has received a request from Jamie Wiener, Executive Director of the Children and Family Resource Center, to place approximately 50 pinwheels on the Historic Courthouse Lawn. The pinwheel has become the symbol for National Child Abuse Prevention Month, which falls during the month of April. The Board is requested to approve the placement of the pinwheels by the Children and Family Resource Center from Thursday, April 16, 2020 through Thursday, April 30, 2020.

Motion:

I move the Board approves the placement of the pinwheels by the Children and Family Resource Center from Thursday, April 16, 2020 through Thursday, April 30, 2020.

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT OF DISCUSSION AGENDA

Chairman Hawkins made the motion to adopt the discussion agenda as presented. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

NOMINATIONS

Chairman Hawkins opened the floor for nominations.

1. Asheville Regional Housing Consortium – 1 vac.

There were no nominations at this time and this item was rolled to the next meeting.

2. EMS Peer Review Committee – 6 vac.

Commissioner Edney nominated William Gillette for position #12, Adam Justus for position #13, Mark Stepp for position #14, Margaretha Clayton for position #15, Roland Joy for position #16, and Lisha Stanley for position #17. *Chairman Hawkins made the motion to accept the reappointments of William Gillette to position #12, Adam Justus to position #13, Mark Stepp to position #14, Margaretha Clayton to position #15, Roland Joy to position #16, and Lisha Stanley to position #17, by acclamation. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

3. Equalization and Review, Henderson County Board of – 4 vac.

Commissioner Messer nominated Joseph Sherman for position #3, Glenn Compton for position #4, Willard Fishburne for position #5, and Ron Kauffman for position #8. *Chairman Hawkins made the motion to accept the reappointments of Joseph Sherman to position #3, Glen Compton to position #4, Willard Fishburne to position #5, and the appointment of Ron Kauffman to position #8 by acclamation. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

4. Fletcher Planning Board & Zoning Board of Adjustment – 1 vac.

Chairman Hawkins nominated Duane Gentle for position #1. *Chairman Hawkins made the motion to accept the reappointment of Duane Gentle to position #1 by acclamation. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

5. Governmental Financing Corporation – 1 vac.

Chairman Hawkins nominated Steve Wyatt for position #2. *Chairman Hawkins made the motion to accept the reappointment of Steve Wyatt to position #2 by acclamation. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

6. Henderson County Planning Board – 3 vac.

Commissioner Messer nominated Paul Patterson for position #5 and Rick Livingston for position #6. Chairman Hawkins nominated Jennifer Balkcom for position #8. *Chairman Hawkins made the motion to accept the reappointments of Paul Patterson to position #5, Rick Livingston to position #6, and the appointment of Jennifer Balkcom to position #8 by acclamation. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

7. Historic Resources Commission – 1 vac.

There were no nominations at this time and this item was rolled to the next meeting.

8. Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee – 2 vac.

Commissioner McCall nominated Roxanne Pepper for position #5. *Chairman Hawkins made the motion to accept the appointment of Roxanne Pepper to position #5 by acclamation. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

9. Industrial Facilities and Pollution Control Financing Authority – 3 vac.

Commissioner Edney nominated Arnold Sheldon for position #3, Diane Grant for position #4, and Jon Laughter for position #6. *Chairman Hawkins made the motion to accept the reappointments of Arnold Sheldon to position #3, Diane Grant to position #4, and John Laughter to position #6 by acclamation. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

10. Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation and Development Program – 2 vac.

Chairman Hawkins nominated Andrew Brannon for position #1. *Chairman Hawkins made the motion to accept the appointment of Andrew Brannon to position #1 by acclamation. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

11. Nursing/Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee – 9 vac.

Commissioner McCall nominated David Smith for position #1. *Chairman Hawkins made the motion to accept the reappointment of David Smith to position #1 by acclamation. All voted in favor and the motion carried.*

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Matthew Rogers, owner of the Three Chopt sandwich shop in Hendersonville, NC, sung God Bless America.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Staff provided the Board with the most current information pertaining to COVID-19 in Henderson County.

Public Health Director Steve Smith and Emergency Management Director Jimmy Brissie answered the following questions received through the County website.

Topic #1 – Recovery Rates:

1. Have clusters of Covid-19 infections been sought and identified in the County? If so, how many and where are they located?

Steve Smith stated the only current clusters or outbreaks are associated with congregate living facilities. Of our total of 99 cases today, 82 are tied to those facilities. This is a combination of residents and staff. Future reports of these cases and deaths will be categorized to congregate living facilities. It is inappropriate for them to continue, on a daily basis, to link specific counts of cases and deaths to individual facilities, which starts to get into a borderline position with medical confidentiality and protected health information. The three outbreaks currently have been publicly announced by the facilities themselves, Cherry Springs, the

Brian Center, and the Laurels. Henderson County has a lot of different settings that fall under the category of congregated living. When you are talking primarily about nursing homes and assisted living communities, you are pushing the 25 mark or so, approximately 1200 residents. If you include all of those kind of definitions, even smaller group homes and behavior health settings, you are getting into 30+ facilities and 1700 residents.

2. Can Henderson County share the number of Covid-19 cases in the County that are now recovered along with the number of overall cases?

Why is Henderson County refusing to release the number of people who have recovered from COVID-19? Buncombe, Craven and several other NC counties have been very proactive with releasing these figures. Why does HC feel it necessary to make people think that there are 58 active cases of people suffering from this, instead why not report out of 58 cases xx number have recovered? It would be very easy to add these numbers to the HC website each day when the number of cases and deaths are updated.

Steve Smith responded they are beginning the process to try and capture recoveries. Their immediate priorities have limited the time available for this type of information gathering. It is an intensive effort that often requires multiple phone calls to an individual that may or may not be completely recovered. It is a difficult balance here between desired information and intrusion into personal lives. They may not be able to sustain that as well if we get into larger number of cases. Mr. Smith shared a conference call with the State Deputy Epidemiologist yesterday, and caution was put forth on reporting recovered numbers because it is somewhat subjective and starts to get borderline in providing healthcare information. They do continue to say that the majority of people do recover. Mr. Smith doesn't feel that Henderson County must keep up with recovery numbers just because Buncombe County does, but it does send a positive context that the vast majority of people are recovering. Since so much of their focus is on long-term care facilities right now, that may look a little bit different with that population.

3. I know that at the time of this message, there are 51 confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Henderson County. Before the outbreak at Cherry Springs, there was a total of 27 confirmed cases. Do you have data on how many of those people have recovered at this point? Also, could the Health Department possibly start sharing data on the number of recoveries on a regular basis? I think it would be good for county residents to see some positive numbers.

Steve Smith answered they are working on the model for reporting recoveries, and many of the current cases recently identified are not at that recovery point yet. It will take a few weeks before they are able to confirm the recoveries.

Topic #2 – Stay At Home Order:

4. With both state and county stay at home orders perhaps you can explain the massive amount of traffic on S Rugby? There is zero reduction in vehicle traffic which makes me believe no one in this county really cares about said stay at home orders. If you have any doubt, just come sit on one of the side streets off S Rugby and watch.

Jimmy Brissie responded to the stay at home order and vehicular traffic, by explaining if you look at both the County's Stay at Home order and the State's Stay at Home order, there are a lot of exceptions for essential

business. Taking care of loved ones, home repairs, for example. There are a lot of provisions where folks might be traveling out and about within the community. By in large, we have asked the community to try to police that themselves. It is hard for our law enforcement partners at the State or local level to look at every vehicle that is traveling to determine what they are doing out in public. What you see are people working. Keep in mind we had a “little windstorm” Sunday so traffic moved around Monday and Tuesday as roads were closed, increasing traffic in certain areas of the community.

5. How are you monitoring compliance with the mask and 6’ rule, especially in grocery stores?

Steve Smith responded he personally, as well as other public health staff, have visited a lot of stores and retail outlets. He has been pretty impressed with the thing’s folks have put in place, the stores themselves. Whether it was taped areas and spacing for checkout lines, plexiglass barriers between clerks and people checking out, signage, handwashing stations, etc. The Health Department responds to concerns on a complaint basis and are trying to proactively visit some stores, just to see what is in place. The recent order by the Governor, Executive Order 131, puts some specific caps on the number of people that can enter a facility based on its square footage or 20% of its occupancy rating by the Fire Marshal. So just containing the number of people that are in the building will help with some of those concerns.

6. Why are so many non-essential businesses still open? I.e.: Reinhardt racing, and all others in the little industrial area there?

Jimmy Brissie answered essential businesses are established in the County’s order and the State’s order by the North Carolina Department of Revenue and the Cyber Security and Infrastructure Security Agency. Many are reflected and spelled out in each of those orders, but one thing they have noticed during these challenging times is that a lot of businesses are flexing what they do to support other parts of the infrastructure. While a business may not directly support health care workers or essential workers, they may be supporting another business that does. An example might be someone that provides auto parts for truck lines who is delivering personal protective equipment from the State. Without knowing specifics of every business within the County, it is hard to make a determination. Agencies are encouraged to look back at the orders from the State and the County to see how they fit.

7. Is there currently a curfew for Henderson County?

Jimmy Brissie responded at this time there is no curfew for Henderson County. The public is being asked to be responsible in how they are going out and about and conducting their essential business during reasonable times.

8. Will the stay at home order be extended? Are people complying?

Jimmy Brissie stated this is hard to predict. Perception is that the majority of people in our community are complying with those orders both local and state. We along with the local government look to the state government as it is continually evaluated on a daily basis. During the Governor’s press release this week, he stated it is important to note that the public’s commitment to this order is what is making it successful in our communities.

9. I am a caregiver of 88-year-old and it's very upsetting to me to see how Henderson County is not taking the Coronavirus serious enough. Why is Lowe's open and packed with people over the weekend people sitting in parks especially Flat Rock park?

Steve Smith said he had visited both facilities and working with both entities too on some additional provisions. The Governor's recent executive order will help with some of that in terms of limiting people that are inside of a building at any given time. The County does appreciate any reports of trouble spots and will continue to visit them based on concerns. Most people are trying to be compliant.

10. I assume the answer is no, but I am asking to make sure: 4 people get together to say hi, outside, staying 10 feet apart at all times. While that may be safe, is it allowed under the Governor's Stay at Home order?

Steve Smith responded thinking about compliance not only with the Governor's order and the County's Declaration of Emergency/Proclamations, he feels this would be allowed. It's a group less than ten, and people being cautious and maintaining social distancing. Although it may generate some concerns, it seems to be a responsible gathering.

11. Is there any way we can keep people from traveling here from places where precautions are not taken as seriously (South Carolina and Florida) during the pandemic?

Steve Smith stated this concern was raised and the Commissioners took it seriously. It culminated in one of the Supplemental Proclamations where restrictions were placed on out of state travelers from hotspots. Mr. Smith has not received a single concern from a lodging establishment or someone in the lodging business, so folks seem to be adapting and adjusting to that very easily. You will see people from out of state travel here that have second homes here. Some of those license plates may be what people are seeing.

12. I live in an apartment community where they are not helping the residents with social distancing. They are allowing the kids (not related) to play together in or near the breezeways making it where residents cannot leave their apartments because the kids are 2 feet from the walkway. This is ridiculous that most of us are trying to adhere to the rules while others prevent us from staying safe. Why can't the police come and enforce the social distancing here? These parents obviously do not care about their kids but what about the rest of us who do care? The police said they are leaving it up to the community, but the community is all talk and no action because despite the numerous complaints, it is still happening. The kids are NOT SOCIAL DISTANCING!!! WE ARE NOT SAFE HERE!!!

Steve Smith hears a lot of concern in this question. It is not possible for law enforcement, public health, or anybody else to strictly enforce this at each and every setting. As difficult as it may be, the right approach in these kind of situations is to have a conversation amongst the residents in the building or with the parents, and even potentially include property management, to see if they can arrive at some common kind of consensus solutions about practical ways to prevent this situation. If no resolution is met, certainly contact public health and they will build into the conversation and assist.

13. I work at an auto dealership in Hendersonville, NC. Because they are still considered "essential", even though we barely have any business, I beg the Commissioner to reconsider keeping them open. Like Buncombe County, we should revamp the essential list down MUCH more. I truly do not believe that citizens of the county are taking this virus as seriously as it should be taken. The practice of safe distancing is barely being used around me on a daily basis. We have cut our hours and our workers are rotating shifts, but we don't feel safe. People are bored from staying home so they will go anywhere that is open and look around. I am the one who has to go around and sanitize all throughout the day because people want to come in and look at cars. Sales should be done by appointment only. Service and Parts might be the only essential areas...at best. PLEASE make your essential list shorter for the county's safety.

Jimmy Brissie responded people are experiencing cabin fever and getting out and conducting business that may or may not be totally essential. Ultimately folks are asking the list of essential businesses be reduced to make the county safer. The Board of Commissioners has held the discussion of what is essential business, and it is largely mirrored to the State's recommendations within the Executive Order. Businesses can modify their model of service delivery, and some have already done so by limiting the number of folks that can come into the business. Businesses are creative and can find ways to meet the needs of the community while still protecting their staff and folks coming into the business. He encourages the businesses to talk to employees and staff to see what they can do to appease some of the concerns.

Topic #3 – Long Term Care Facilities:

14. Can there be a breakdown of Covid-19 counts on assisted living facilities and other Covid-19 counts showing on the daily Covid-19 county listing?

Jimmy Brissie reiterated information shared before by Mr. Smith. Currently 82 of our 99 cases are associated with long-term care facilities. Based on concerns from medical confidentiality of those patients of those facilities and protected HIPA information, we cannot link specific cases with the facility or death counts. Moving forward the plan is to capture some of the data at the County level to share with Henderson County folks to see what is in the community and what is in congregate care facilities.

15. I would like to see how many cases are in the assisted living facilities. And how many cases are in general population. And how many have recovered from covid19 in our area. Asheville tells how many they have and how many recovered. Thanks.

Jimmy Brissie stated this information will be added to the dashboard moving forward.

16. Were you able to trace the source of the infection at Cherry Springs Assisted Living? Are the infected staff having their families with whom they live tested?

Jimmy Brissie responded there has not been any determination of the source of transmission for the cases at this particular facility, and there have been many more than one. With asymptomatic transmission, we may never know in a definitive way where an infection comes from but all those in close contact with those folks who have been ill have been identified and provided guidance about the necessary quarantine isolation and testing if needed.

17. Why has there been no mention of the positive patient at the Laurels of Hendersonville? Is their more there we are not getting straight answers and we have a loved one in the home? Could you please look into this? Thank you from someone very concerned.

Jimmy Brissie stated the Laurels actually self-reported two cases with a press release without being prompted. If folks are unable to get information about loved ones in a facility the Health Department's Communicable Disease section can assist with trouble shooting. Their phone number is 694-6019, and they will be glad to assist.

Topic #4 – Testing:

18. While I understand the privacy issues, I wonder why you are not providing more information. When we went from 25 to 50, it was revealed that 23 cases were from one place. When we went from 58 to 68 to 71 in a bit over one day, there was not an explanation anywhere. The 23 aside, the rest of the community just went from 35 to 48, an almost 40% increase. Other places around the country are providing cases by zip code or town or other details regarding large increases. And why no information out there about the extent of testing in our county? Are we getting more cases due to more testing or is testing still so scarce that we are in the blind about the extent of the virus around us?

Jimmy Brissie shared the public health response: All facilities to date without outbreaks have been very proactive in announcing initial cases. Due to the medical confidentiality and patient privacy concerns the Health Department cannot link case and death counts to individual facilities on an ongoing basis. All contact, close contact, facility staff and family members have been notified of critical information. Our aggregate characterization today is that 82 of our current 99 cases are associated with these congregate living facilities, assisted living nursing homes and those types of facilities. We are identifying more cases because facilities are actively reporting any concerns about symptomatic staff or residents and we have been accomplishing aggressive contact tracing and testing for this high-risk population as identified weeks ago.

19. I tried to watch the last one (livestream) but found it difficult. It started with a lot of talking and then questions but didn't give the information most people are tuning in for. The public wants to know what's happening. Why not start with H.C. information?
- a. How many tested positive cases (breakdown by age, if possible)
 - b. How many total tests (positive & negative)
 - c. How many fatalities
 - d. How many cases in Pardee and Advent
 - e. Percent of ICU capacity at both when/if things get bad.

Jimmy Brissie responded the Health Department is currently reporting information on their website regarding positive tests. Mr. Smith and his team are working on an expanded dashboard to capture a little more granular information based on age and that kind of demographic. There have been approximately 500 tests given, but there are multiple testing streams. One of the benefits we have in our community is that folks can go to one of the two hospitals for testing if appropriate, or the Urgent Care at Pardee if warranted. Blue Ridge Community Health is doing testing in addition to the Health Department. Collectively across all those user groups is over 500 tests, with 99 positive results. Fatalities are reported daily on the Public Health website and as of the last posting it was seven (7). In regard to Pardee and Advent cases, one of the things

Mr. Smith spoke of several times is that the County will not be reporting cases or deaths specific to facilities due to medical confidentiality and protected health information concerns. Collectively in Henderson County we have 19 ICU beds available, and there are 11 ICU beds occupied at the moment. Not all of those may be specific to Covid-19, some may be for other issues.

20. I would like to know if Coronavirus Antibody testing is available here? Will it be available to general public? Where can I get it if I believe I may have had the virus but want to make sure?

Steve Smith stated Coronavirus Antibody testing is not yet available here to his knowledge. You are beginning to see those initiatives in other parts of the country. It will be very useful information for us since we are not able to test the general population broadly now or perhaps even in the future even though we will get into larger numbers. It will help us understand on a very large scale how many people have been exposed and contracted the virus which may have never had symptoms at all. He is coordinating with the State North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and they do envision that effort in partnership with our Universities and Research Facilities to try to get to that at some point. It however will not be a County specific project. In terms of available to the general public, he feels they will do random stratified sampling, but will probably not try to test everyone in the County...but enough people and diversity to get a statistically valid sample about the disease spread and cases in the community.

21. Good afternoon. I have seen on the Henderson County webpage where you report the number of positive cases of Covid-19 in the county each day. I am curious to know approximately how many tests are being given in the county, so that this "positive test" number can be put into context. Thank you for all that the county is doing to keep its residents safe.

Steve Smith said again of those test numbers that have been reported today around 500 tests have been given. We have so many testing sites and so many testing streams, and the hospitals are being very innovative even in some instances using laboratories out of state that don't feed into something that our Health Department can see. The process is trying to be formalized at this time so that anyone that is doing testing in the County those numbers would be captured by the Health Department.

22. I live in Flat Rock NC when can I be tested?

Steve Smith feels this is an open-ended question and doesn't know about this individual's personal circumstances. He would tell anyone if they were interested in being tested for Covid 19, the first conversation is with their primary care physician. They would have to understand a little bit about your circumstances, your health condition, and the necessity of being tested. The standing advice is if you have no symptoms or very mild symptoms, it is asked that you not pursue that, because just coming out into the community to achieve that testing could create exposure risks for you or others. Example: If you have mild symptoms today...if you had had those same symptoms a year ago and would not have gone to the doctor then, don't go to the doctor now. People must work through this with their doctor. Through contact tracing and those that might have high risk conditions, there some very encouraging conversations happening regionally now with big partners like Mahec and Dogwood Health Trust that are really soliciting the resources needed so that we can get into expanded testing throughout the region and partnership. Mr. Smith is unsure of the timeframe before we can get that testing capacity. There continues to be comments and concerns regarding enough tests being available. If a citizen of the county is seriously sick and they suspect

they may have a problem related to Covid 19, they go to their primary care physician who then reviews their situation, and if the Physician feels they should be tested, they are tested. Mr. Smith is not aware of anyone who has been turned down in those circumstances.

23. Due to the issues associate with tracking # of Covid 19 cases (i.e., not everyone with symptoms get tested, tests may not be available, tests may deliver false negative, etc.), is it possible to track and report on the number of hospitalized victims? This should be much easier to track and provide an indication of where we are in the pandemic process. It's not a perfect metric, but what is?

Steve Smith stated there is no perfect metric, but the intent here is to get more information. We will be consistent with the State's dashboard, in that we will potentially talk about bed capacity, ventilator capacity, or ICU bed capacity, using hospital metrics. For some reason just talking about numbers of people who are hospitalized feels a little different to him and more individualized.

24. Can you tell me why Henderson county has such a high death rate compared to other counties? It appears from the numbers you provide the death rate would be around 4%.

Steve Smith is not sure at what moment and time this was calculated in comparison to other counties. Today that percentage would actually be a little bit higher. It is really for the reasons that you know today and are aware of, that if 82 of our cases are tied to congregate living facilities – senior, elderly folks where practically all of them have serious underlying chronic health conditions, so there is always going to be a higher mortality rate with those folks.

25. Why is it that Buncombe County with nearly twice the population of Henderson County has about half of the amount of confirmed covid19 cases then Henderson County and about half the amount of deaths?

Steve Smith responded that we have been in a very favorable position and did not want to comment on any other county's priorities or objectives. He credits our hospitals, Blue Ridge Health, Emergency Management and our long-term care facilities for going all in on a common strategy very early on in this outbreak, knowing that our highest-risk people would be in those long-term care facilities. With that collective model we have been able to go in very with any mention of an A-symptomatic person and do more testing than long term testing facilities and identify those cases early. He does not think there is a similar process in place for Buncombe County or most other counties. He receives a daily briefing from the State in what is the most common reference thing today is that outbreaks in these facilities are popping up quickly in counties across North Carolina. We are being called and consulted with about our process here because we were able to get in early and identify those cases.

Topic #5 – Hot Spots:

26. If we know where the cases are, we know where we can get food. We live right off clear creek at the rest homes. some people in our neighborhood work at cherry creek. protect our rights too, we do not want to get the virus.
27. Are there other local hot spots besides Cherry Spring Village, and if so where?
28. We know about the nursing homes COV-19. Do you know where the other outbreaks are in our county?

29. The cases of covid-19 is growing rapidly in Henderson County. Where are cases more prevalent?
30. Why are we not being informed where the cases are located in Henderson County? Where are the hotspots? Very poor communication in such a terrible and scary time. Very disappointed!!

Steve Smith stated the physical location of cases really have no bearing at all on the transmission risks that you as an individual may experience. He has seen different kinds of models, but for every confirmed case that we have you could easily have 6, 7, 8 or 9 cases in the community that we do not know about. There is no specific linkage or threat because of proximity to another case. We do not announce physical locations of individuals for any other communicable disease and we cannot for this as well. He feels if people continue to practice stay at home, social distancing, the other protective measures like wearing a face covering, those are the things that need to be focused on and not be overly concerned about where cases are located. There are three known outbreaks at three facilities which have been disclosed. No other clusters have been identified. He noted that other than the three facilities with 82 cases, there are only 17 known cases in the general population. The primary focus has been in long-term care facilities which is why the case count has grown so rapidly with outbreaks in those facilities.

Topic #5 – Other:

31. You have many knitters and crochet residents that can knit masks or crochet or sew. Has the appeal been voiced to them to ask for assistance making masks? I made five in one day and used leftover scrap yarn. I made my own pattern because people online were charging outrageous price for their pattern which is awful. I used an insert between my double layer masks something everyone that used dryer sheets they just toss in trash. They are thick do not let light through. They are washable and anyone can make. I used elastic for over the ears attach. Surely the craft clubs would step up.

Jimmy Brissie stated this is a tremendous example of how our community can come together. A weekly conference call is held with community partners with solid work by the Council on Aging, Food Banks, etc. This week it was asked if there were places people could go to get some of these homemade masks. We have been fortunate to have some donated from the community and we encourage anyone in the community who is able to do that to contact the Emergency Operations Center at 697-4728. We can connect them with an organization that is needing some of those masks. This week we are starting to see deliveries of personal protective equipment coming from the State Emergency Operations Center. These are commercially produced masks and other supplies that are being shared with health care agencies with needs. Homemade masks are a great chance for someone to give back to our community.

The materials necessary for the two testing platforms that Pardee and Advent have, that offer a rapid test are allocated at State level. We have been able to request some of those materials for both facilities. The commercial type tests have been ordered for the region and will be allocated out to agencies willing to do the testing. The timeframe for shipping is not known yet but the process has been undergoing for several weeks. Some local doctor's offices have said that their hope was to have rapid test inhouse because the machine will do multiple test, not just Covid tests.

Steve Smith stated there are discrepancies in data. If you are a confirmed Covid 19 case and you unfortunately die it is listed as a death on the public health website. Before the State will reflect the information, the County must enter some evolved medical information in a North Carolina electronic disease and surveillance system. They will look at that information as well as the final death certificate from the attending physician. Sometimes Covid 19 is listed as the primary cause, and sometimes it is listed as the secondary cause. We feel that most of the deaths being reported will remain valid, but a few may actually be screened out.

Jimmy Brissie explained that with the long-term care facilities the process started months ago by getting

good information on who the folks are in those facilities and their staff members. We do have a proportionally larger number of those facilities in Henderson County doing some solid work. Probably in early March we started doing regular conference calls with them. Steve's team at the Health Department was doing regular outreach with their staff members offering to assist with sharing guidance from the State and Federal Government assisting with training. Those conference calls occur weekly and we also include their medical directors. Each of the facilities have a medical director, a physician that they contract with to provide care to those patients. In assisted living facilities they typically fall under a primary care provider, their doctor that comes into the facility. Each of the medical directors in Henderson County are very active. In the instance of one of the facilities that had an outbreak, two physicians have been there daily visiting their patients making sure they are getting their proper care. It starts with education, and then when there is an outbreak, we employ a strike team sending the resources we can to that facility. Steve's team continues that daily contact from the Health Department. The widespread testing that takes place in those facilities is to make sure that those patients are identified and isolated to where they are in one spot and they can't be spreading. We do the same from EMS and Emergency Management standpoint. We connect with their leadership locally. Most of them are under some sort of corporate structure so we also talk to their corporate leadership. We find out what their needs are, and we connect them with those resources. Both hospitals have done a phenomenal job of assisting all of the facilities, providing additional supplies such as thermometers.

It is mandated in the Governor's order for employees of long-term care facilities to wear masks. Most all facilities had already implemented visitor restrictions prior to the Board of Commissioners encouraging it.

Steve Smith stated re-opening is on everyone's mind. He attended a virtual meeting with the Board of Health and Dr. Ellis. The Chief Medical Officer for Pardee put forth comments that tied in with this subject. He thought that everything we had been doing to date was absolutely necessary in taking this seriously. There are a lot of unknowns and trying to avoid the surge demand on the hospitals. We must get larger scale community testing in place. We are still 18 months away from a vaccine. Sooner or later we will have to transition back to something a little closer to our normal. We must accept that Corona Virus is part of our landscape and one of our disease components in our communities. People will get sick and people will die, the same way that we accept that with seasonal flu. That transition should potentially include additional provisions for those with high risk conditions to continually protect themselves in a different way. Mr. Smith does not believe you can stay here long term because of the associated harm that families and others are also experiencing by being out of work and having limited income. Lack of certainty is difficult and telling people you just don't know is hard. Speculation is irresponsible. Our circumstances will be heavily influenced by State and Federal decisions.

Steve Smith responded to Commissioner McCall regarding media's report that one Covid patient might have received the virus through a nurse who was working with another Covid patient. Dr. Curran, our medical director, has been in public health for decades, and has been intimately involved with infection control practices of hospitals. She is an expert at infection control, but also in communicative disease control measures, and hospitals must deal with both worlds. Conversations were held with Pardee and they were very proactive in linking with the Health Department about concerns that had been put out there specific to this. Dr. Curran did assist in a medical review of that case, looking at all of the information that was available and she reached a conclusion that there was no evidence that that transmission happened in the hospital environment.

Chairman Hawkins noted that both executive orders from the Governor expire at the end of the month. The Board of Commissioners sent a letter to the Governor yesterday asking him to allow this County to make its own plan going forward to get our people back to work. We need to get our people back to work sooner than later. Hopefully the Governor will see the wisdom in letting counties development their own plan.

Chairman Hawkins has asked Commissioners to look at a Task Force headed up by Commissioner Lapsley and Commissioner McCall, to start developing a cross section of businesses, health providers, restaurant owners, etc. of our community to begin looking at how we plan to move forward, if and when we get the green light at the end of the month.

CONSTRUCTIONS PROJECTS UPDATE

David Berry provided the Board of Commissioners with an update on the following construction projects around Henderson County. This monthly report is a review of the scope and statuses of assigned construction management responsibilities and includes specific updates in regard to County funded construction activities.

Last week upper management instructed staff to stop any construction related projects that a PO had not been written.

**MRTS Project Update – Henderson County Public Schools
Facilities Maintenance and Repair, Technology and Security Initiatives**

Detailed Project Report						At A Glance - Summary Report
PROJECT	FY20 BOC APPROVED	\$ EXPENDED/ ENCUMBERED	% EXPENDED/ ENCUMBERED	PROJECT STATUS	TOTAL REMAINING	
Elementary Schools						<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>MRTS Project Status</p> <p>■ \$ EXPENDED/ ENCUMBERED ■ TOTAL REMAINING</p> </div>
Dana - Gym Roof	\$ 140,000	\$ 62,300	44.50%	Completed	\$ 77,700	
Etowah - Gym Roof	\$ 110,000	\$ 61,810	56.19%	Completed	\$ 48,190	
Hendersonville - iWorks Control System	\$ 40,000	\$ 32,500	81.25%	Completed	\$ 7,500	
Upward - Entrance/Cafeteria	\$ 702,000	\$ 46,724	6.66%	ON HOLD	\$ 655,276	
Middle Schools						
Flat Rock HVAC - Phase I	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,021	100.00%	In Progress	\$ (21)	
Flat Rock - Paving	\$ 50,000	\$ 2,650	5.30%	In Progress	\$ 47,350	
Rugby HVAC - Phase I	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,021	100.00%	In Progress	\$ (21)	
Rugby - Paving	\$ 100,000	\$ 102,677	102.68%	In Progress	\$ (2,677)	
Rugby - Main Entrance	\$ 500,000	\$ 37,350	7.47%	ON HOLD	\$ 462,650	
High Schools						
East - Paving	\$ 100,000	\$ 65,993	65.99%	In Progress	\$ 34,007	
West - iWorks and fan coil replacement	\$ 70,000	\$ 63,237	90.34%	Completed	\$ 6,763	
West - Paving	\$ 100,000	\$ 126,964	126.96%	In Progress	\$ (26,964)	
Other						
ADA Study - Stadiums	\$ 25,000	\$ -	0.00%	ON HOLD	\$ 25,000	
Former Hillandale - Demolition	\$ 197,000	\$ 196,800	99.90%	Completed	\$ 200	
Contingency	\$ 200,000	\$ 48,173	24.09%	ON HOLD	\$ 151,827	
Johnson Farm Sewer Improvement	\$ -	\$ 48,173	-	Completed	\$ -	
Project Empower Chromebooks	\$ 300,000	\$ -	0.00%	ON HOLD	\$ 300,000	
Unallocated	\$ 36,760	\$ -	0.00%	ON HOLD	\$ 36,760	
TOTAL	\$ 4,670,760	\$ 2,847,220	60.96%	----	\$ 1,823,540	

The Upward entrance cafeteria is one project that has been put on hold. Prior to being put on hold, this project is an approved project included and listed on the approved Henderson County MRTS spreadsheet. All NC Statutes were followed in regard to the project being formally advertised; pre-bid attendance records, posted-bid tab results, etc. After the bids were received the project scope was initially adjusted down and negotiated with the low-bid contract with Carolina Construction Specialties, to bring the project cost within the \$702,000. Henderson County Public Schools then requested that project “add alternates” including some additional needed paving be added. With the add alternates, the new project cost is \$850,991 plus the architectural fees, required testing and surveying, bringing the total project cost to \$897,675. On March 18, following the Board of Commissioners’ meeting, Beau Caldwell, John Bryant, Blair Craven and Mr. Berry discussed the project with Commissioner Lapsley to allow for moving forward with this project with the understanding that the project cost overage would be offset by the savings on other completed MRTS projects, and if necessary some reduction in the overall MRTS contingency line item. It was agreed and Mr. Berry was requested to proceed as long as the overall MRTS annual project budget is not exceeded. All the project bidding and requested contracts of documentation have been forwarded to Henderson County Finance requesting a Purchase Order, but since the project is above the \$500,000 for formal range, and because the project cost exceeded the estimated MRTS cost estimate it would be necessary to bring it before the Board

for approval. Had the April 6th Board meeting been held, the project would have been openly discussed as part of his report and possibly approved. Since none of that happened the project is on hold, and we do not have a signed contract. The bid numbers are based on a June starting point.

Rugby Main Entrance

Also placed on hold without contract.

John Mitchell noted he has spoken with both executives at Blue Ridge Community College and in the Public Schools have discussed the projects being on hold with both of their Boards.

Hendersonville High School

Construction is essential so contractors are able to do even more with the kids out of school. Pictures below are contractors removing the old gym.





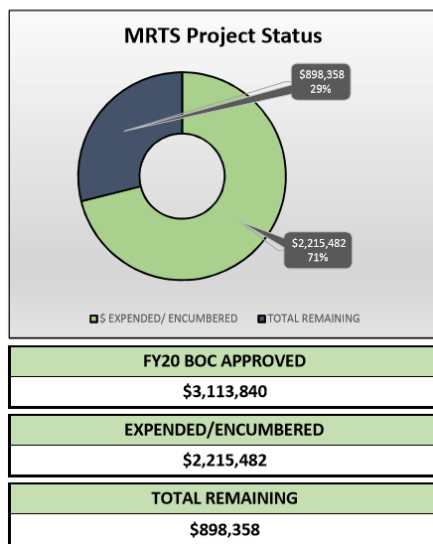


MRTS Project Update – Blue Ridge Community College
Facilities Maintenance and Repair, Technology and Security Initiatives

Detailed Project Report

PROJECT	FY20 BOC APPROVED	\$ EXPENDED/ ENCUMBERED	% EXPENDED/ ENCUMBERED	PROJECT STATUS	TOTAL REMAINING
Continuing Education					
Renovation for BLET	\$ 405,872	\$ 79,147	19.50%	ON HOLD	\$ 326,725
Replace Chiller	\$ 121,400	\$ 115,602	95.22%	In Progress	\$ 5,798
Grounds/Maintenance					
Replace heaters and circular fans	\$ 6,312	\$ 5,913	93.68%	Complete	\$ 399
Re-Coat Roof	\$ 8,440	\$ 8,119	96.20%	Complete	\$ 321
Industrial Skills Center					
Install Ventilation System	\$ 22,500	\$ 19,255	85.58%	Complete	\$ 3,245
Install Welding Booth	\$ 35,000	\$ 11,305	32.30%	ON HOLD	\$ 23,695
Sink					
Replace Chiller	\$ 225,000	\$ 181,062	80.47%	In Progress	\$ 43,938
New Furniture	\$ 262,500	\$ 245,363	93.47%	Complete	\$ 17,137
Spearman					
Replace Boiler	\$ 80,000	\$ 62,340	77.93%	In Progress	\$ 17,660
Install Generator	\$ 21,000	\$ 19,694	93.78%	Complete	\$ 1,306
Renovation for Trades Programs	\$ 24,657	\$ 22,022	89.31%	Complete	\$ 2,635
New Furniture	\$ 168,356	\$ 167,118	99.26%	In Progress	\$ 1,238
TEDC					
Replace Compressors	\$ 21,529	\$ 20,168	93.68%	Complete	\$ 1,361
Replace Conference Hall Tables and Chairs	\$ 165,314	\$ 164,846	99.72%	Complete	\$ 468
Campus Wide Improvements					
Outdoor Lighting Improvements	\$ 134,250	\$ 68,843	51.28%	In Progress	\$ 65,407
Sidewalk Installation	\$ 83,710	\$ 83,255	99.46%	Complete	\$ 455
Update Wayfinding and Monument Signs	\$ 300,000	\$ -	0.00%	In Progress	\$ 300,000
Additional Classroom Space					
Surveyor Fee	\$ 52,854	\$ 60,382	114.24%	In Progress	\$ (7,528)
Architect Fee	\$ 975,146	\$ 881,050	90.35%	In Progress	\$ 94,096
TOTAL	\$ 3,113,840	\$ 2,215,482	71.15%	----	\$ 898,358

At A Glance - Summary Report



Continuing Education

Blue Ridge Community College is concerned about the hold on this project as it is part of a larger project. This space is already somewhat torn apart. We do not have a bid or PO in hand for this project.

COUNTY FACILITIES

DSS Expansion

This project is ongoing with Cooper Construction, the job is approximately 50% complete.

95 Courthouse Holding Cell

This is a \$50,000 - \$75,000 project and is in process. We are waiting on the final design and it has not yet been advertised. Staff will bring it back before the Board at a later date.

95 Courthouse Skylights

This is a done deal and the PO has been written. Staff is working on scheduling at this time.

COUNTY MANAGER’S REPORT

Steve Wyatt stated prior to the decision to pause projects, he had consulted with the Dr. Laura Leatherwood of BRCC and Superintendent Beau Caldwell of Henderson County Public Schools and explained to them the concerns. They were very understanding.

Commissioner Lapsley asked the County Manager if we should consider moving ahead with some of the projects or continue to have them on hold.

Steve Wyatt stated at the Board’s next meeting we will discuss projects. The issue he has the most concern with is sales tax revenue. Estimates for the April, May, June reductions are forecasted anywhere from 10-50% (possible loss of up to \$8-10m in revenues). We know it will not be where we predicted. Unfortunately, the numbers come to us a couple of months late. Next month as we talk about the budget for the next fiscal year, we will need to visit the remaining current projects. With the economy right now construction is going forward, but there are risks in costs escalation if we delay significantly, but there is also the potentially, based on the economy, for the prices to go down due to slowing of the economy with few dollars being circulated. There is also concern for property tax collections.

TERRY ELVI FOSTER

Commissioner Messer asked everyone to be in prayer for the family of Terry “Elvi” Foster. His funeral will be held Thursday, April 16, 2020 with drive-by viewing.

HENDERSON COUNTY BOND RATING

Steve Wyatt shared that Henderson County has received an upgrade to bonding for borrowing. The lending agencies Standard & Poor’s and Moody’s are the two major bonding agencies in the United States and they both evaluated us thoroughly. We have a confirmation of an upgrade to our credit rating. We are talking with the Local Government Commission and also our financial advisors while looking at rates and it is a good time to borrow money. We are looking at probably 2-2.5 percentage rates.

ADJOURN

Chairman Hawkins made the motion to adjourn at 11:40 a.m. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Attest:

Teresa L. Wilson, Clerk to the Board

Grady H. Hawkins, Chairman